

Senate Resolution 1169

By: Senator Hill of the 4th

A RESOLUTION

1 Celebrating the centennial anniversary of the Town of Portal; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, E. E. Foy, an astute entrepreneur from Effingham County, Georgia, recognized
3 the wealth of the vast pine forests in northwest Bulloch County and began his business
4 ventures in the area in 1884 when he purchased a sawmill property near Rocky Ford and 755
5 acres of land, including the site of Old Portal; and

6 WHEREAS, in 1891, the E. E. Foy Manufacturing Company was incorporated to
7 manufacture and deal in lumber, spirits of turpentine, farming, operation of cotton gins, grist
8 mills, and a general mercantile business; over the next two years, Foy leased land to Old
9 Portal for what would become part of the first railroad in Bulloch County; and

10 WHEREAS, in 1908, Portal was revived at its present site when the Georgia Realty
11 Company, chartered in 1907, negotiated with Elerbee Daughtry and "Doll" Williams to
12 develop a new town on the Savannah, Augusta, and Northern railroads. Portal soon had
13 several stores, a school, a steam powered cotton gin, and a turpentine still; and

14 WHEREAS, according to the United States Census of 1920, Portal had six grocers, two dry
15 goods merchants, a hardware store, two blacksmiths, three doctors, two dentists, and five
16 teachers. By this date, the town had constructed Baptist and Methodist churches, and the
17 Portal School had grades one through nine. Portal, incorporated in 1914, became the
18 shopping hub for an extended community that sprawled from Hopeulikit to Aaron and from
19 Upper Lotts Creek to the Ogeechee River. During cotton picking season, lines of wagons
20 waited their turn at the two gins. In spite of the boll weevil problem, Leroy Bird ginned
21 5,000 bales of cotton in 1929; and

22 WHEREAS, after the Great Depression and World War II, Portal declined as local farmers
23 sought jobs in the city. Unfortunately, the Georgia and Florida Railroad ceased to operate
24 in 1950, but the local high school, churches, merchants, and businesses cooperated to keep

1 the town alive. Since the 1950's, the town's population has fluctuated between 600 and 800
2 residents; and

3 WHEREAS, new winds of progress, however, are stirring again as the town awaits the
4 construction of a new high school, housing developments, and improvements in its
5 infrastructure such as streets and sewage and water systems. As Portal enters a new century,
6 this unique community is ready to embrace change but is also dedicated to preserving its
7 past.

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
9 join in celebrating the centennial anniversary of the Town of Portal, Georgia, and honor the
10 rich heritage of its 100 years.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
12 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Mayor Larry W. Motes.